

INTRODUCTION OF U.S. SENATOR BILL FRIST
BY ARC FEDERAL CO-CHAIR ANNE POPE
DDAA CONGRESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT

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When Bill Frist was a young man, Tennessee Congressman Joe Evins told his college intern that should he ever want to serve in Congress he should first excel in a profession other than politics and then bring that experience back to Washington.

After that point and through raising a family, literally saving lives as one of Tennessee's most renown heart surgeons and as founder of Vanderbilt Transplant Center—those experiences have made Bill Frist who he is today. Through his talents and those experiences, Bill Frist gained an innate instinct for the public good and a sense of integrity and fairness rarely seen in public life today.

Soon after becoming Senator Frist, he was on the Senate floor and his staff was stressing out over a bill the Senator was sponsoring. "This isn't stressful," Senator Frist said. "This is important but not stressful. Stressful is having a mother on the operating table and not being able to save her life."

Bill Frist brings a sense of humanity to the Senate that I believe was created through the life and death situations he experienced on a daily basis as a surgeon. He brings a certain head, calmness and depth to politics that we so desperately need today

And since Bill Frist was first elected 11 years ago, our world, and particularly our region, has changed -and changed, for the better. Senator Frist spoke up for the people of Appalachia by voicing his support for ARC's five-year reauthorization bill signed by the President in 2002. In 2003 and again in 2004 he fought to ensure ARC had adequate funding to further its mission of helping Appalachia reach economic parity with the nation. Senator Frist has been there when ARC has needed him most.

And he has been there for the people of Appalachia in countless other ways too. Whether it is helping entrepreneurs and small business owners like Regina Murray or championing the importance of clean, safe drinking water so central to our mission at ARC or on health issues, as Congress' only physician, his actions and expertise are improving lives in Appalachia, the nation and the world over.

This is a man that everyone admires. He has more awards and accolades that I could name. The President trusts and depends on him. When I was in NYC last summer, instead of the small group of Tennesseans gathered to honor Sen. Frist and his AIDS relief work that I expected, we got Rock Star BONO of U2 decked out in his sunglasses and earring, with his arm around Sen. Frist calling him "Brother".

Bill Frist makes me proud to be from Tennessee. When he was first elected, my father said "that man is a 100 watts of bright". And like me I know every Tennessean in this

room has watched in utter amazement his meteor like rise to the top of national politics while at the same time not forgetting where he came from, still helping with the small things and no one is better at constituent service than Senator Frist and his staff.

I know this first hand. You see I got a call at 11:06 one night—I didn't answer it because I am embarrassed to say I was already in bed—but it was Senator Frist calling to tell me I had been confirmed by the Senate.

So it is my honor to introduce a man who is deeply committed to the people of Appalachia and a fellow “Tennessee Volunteer” Senator Bill Frist.